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FLASHBACK

1976
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

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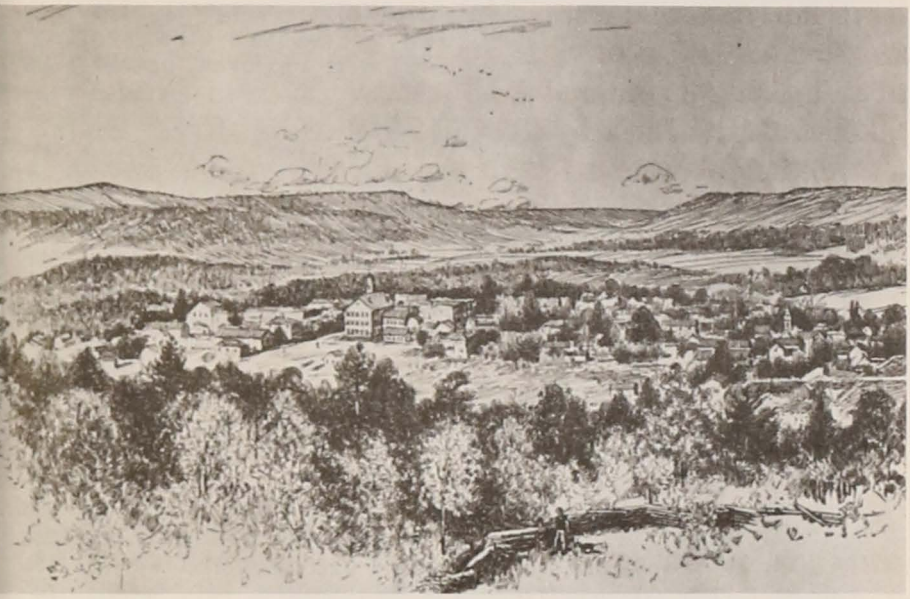
A YOUNG MAN LOOKS AT FAYETTEVILLE IN THE 1830'S

EDITED BY PAT DONAT



(Editor's Note: The following letters, an exciting and exceptionally well written first hand account of life in Fayetteville in 1838-1839 were made available to the Society by Dr. Dwain E. Manske. Xerox copies of the originals are on file at the WCHS office.)

On April 10, 1838, Stuart Walter Case left his home in New Albany, Indiana to come to the western frontier as a clerk for a Mr. Wilson. The 19-year-old boy remained with Wilson until October of that year when he took a position with Mr. James Sutton in Fayetteville, a town he had viewed on an earlier visit and liked--at first!

However, the enchantment quickly faded for Case and he found the frontier a little too raw for his liking. Across the Ohio River from Louisville, Ky., New Albany had been founded in 1813 and by the late 1830s it was an important retail and wholesale trading center. In 1837 it had 60 retail grocery and drygoods stores and at least 15 other stores engaged in both retail and wholesale marketing. Also, it had gained a reputation for the building of fine steamboats. Apparently the contrast between this, plus a bad case of homesickness, caused frontier life in Arkansas to be a bitter experience for the youth.

Even before the Wright murder and the Wallace fracas on the

Square, a note of homesickness crept into Case's letters. After these events his adopted town lost its appeal for him, and his homesickness became an acute illness, making it impossible for him to view anything dispassionately. Perhaps by temperament he was inclined to bombast, as witness his tirade against General Key, but he was sympathetic with children, as revealed by his description of a young girl's death. For whatever reason, Fayetteville did not remain the beautiful city with "pretentions of society" that he first described.

It is puzzling, at this late date, as to why Case suddenly began signing his surname "CAYCE" instead of "Case" as before. Perhaps the affair with the young lady was more serious than he admitted to his parents. Even after his departure from Arkansas, he apparently spelled it both ways for the Indiana records show both spellings.

He was indecisive, apparently right up to the last moment, as to whether he would return to New Albany or go to Texas. In a way he actually did both.

In 1844 he became city clerk of New Albany and in 1846 he was mustered into Co. A, of the Second Regiment Indiana Volunteers as a first lieutenant. This company was commanded by Col. S. Churchill and saw service in the Mexican War. His friend Sanderson (or a relative) was a captain in the same company, and both were mustered in June 20 and mustered out June 23, a year later, at New Orleans, Louisiana.

Capt. Sanderson's company, originally an independent volunteer company, was formed in New Albany in 1844 and named "The Spencer Grays" to honor Captain Spencer, a brave Indianan who fell at Tippecanoe. The corps became the crack company of the state and upon outbreak of the Mexican War nearly all its members volunteered for the U. S. service. The company encamped for a few days on the New Orleans battleground, and spent several months at Camp Belknap, a few miles up the east bank of the Rio Grande. Then it marched into the interior and took a prominent part in the battle of Buenz Cruz.

This information from History of the Ohio Falls Counties and Cities, was provided through the courtesy of Mrs. Alig, manuscripts librarian of the Indiana Historical Society Library.

Mrs. Alig also included information taken from census records of New Albany in 1850, showing a Stewart W. Case, age 30, as a clerk buying real estate valued at $800. He was living either in a hotel or a rooming house, for there are 22 persons listed at the same address, and he was not married then. In 1850 his brother Abram, nine years Stuart's senior, was also living in New Albany. He and his wife Rebecca were the parents of many

of the children mentioned in these letters, including William, John and Charles. Abram, even at an earlier age, was a man of substance, having served as a school trustee as early as 1841. He was a saddler by trade. The census records checked by Mrs. Alig showed no record of a Thomas Case.

Mr. Thomas Case
New Albany, Ind.
P. O. Vineyard July 11 (Paid 25
pr/Mail

Oakland July 6th 1838

Dear father

I Rec'd your affectionate letter on last Sunday, July 1st, but on account of going to Fayetteville I deferred writing until this time. I am well and have enjoyed good health Since I left Albany.

I suppose you know before this time Mr. Wilson did not (as we expected, and he said he would when he left Albany) go to Fayetteville, but for various reasons declined going there and purchased a small farm near the Boundary line between the Neosho Territory and Arkansas State. This place is a point of considerable importance, being just where the "Military Road" that leads down to Fort Gibson leaves the State line. The Road is one (of) the best anywhere near here and there is an immense amount of travel on it, waggons passing constantly going down in the Nation, among the Indians to trade, loaded generally with meal, bacon and flour and most other kinds of provisions. All these articles are worth about one hundred per cent more in the Nation than they are here. Flour is worth here 5 to 6$ per 100 cwt. meal is 75 to 100 per bushel; bacon 11 cents; corn from 75 to 1.00; wheat never can be bought for a 1.00; beef three cents; chickens 12½ cts. to 25; eggs 12½ cents; butter 12 cents. The dearest articles that there is in this country is stock, any kind of a good broken horse will fetch from 80 to 120$; a milk cow with young calf is worth from 20 to 30$; cows dry ---- ---- --- (illegible).

The reason of the high prices of stock is that the Cherokee Emigrants came last fall in such droves without any stock of their own, but plenty of money and they bought up the most of the cattle in this country, consequently the present high prices. Wilson bought this place for its natural advantages (it being well supplied with water) and the Indian trade in the neighborhood. Our customers being, a great many of them, Indians or Mixed Bloods which is "all vas in dutch." Some of them are very fine people, a great many white people here are mixing with the Indians. A white man with a Black wife is an occurrence not at all uncommon here and vice versa. A good many of the people on this side of the line are seriously

alarmed about the Creek Indians as 'tis said they have showed a hostile aspect toward the whites. There is a great many reports afloat now, the chief of which are that the Creek Indians are in a starving condition and are very much dissatisfied and have killed one or two of their agents, burned their fence and are swearing vengeance against the whites.

There is (a) great deal of exaggeration in these reports. There is no doubt however, the clearest headed old farmers that we have this side of the line, think there will be an Indian War, but they think it will be some time hence. These Creeks are mixed with the Seminoles who have just (been) fetched from Florida in irons, same as the Creeks were. They were fighting with the whites just before they left and they are trying to stir it up again. I have no doubt but there will be an Indian War here at no distant date, any person will think so that knows the circumstances under which they came. Many of them in Boats and when the Boat lands they are not suffered to go ashore at all. Also the greater part of them removed from their homes in Florida forcibly and it is natural that men treated so must come here with very embittered feelings against the whites, and more particularly Creek Indians who are noted for being treacherous, cruel and revengeful. The Creek Nation lies within about 60 miles from this place, that is the main part, but there is a great many Vagabond Creeks roaming about among the Cherokees working for little or nothing and stealing the Balance.

As for the troops at Fort Gibson, there is not enough of them to protect themselves let alone protect the whites, for the said Indians can turn out over ten thousand warriors, exclusive of the Seminoles.

I don't want you to be alarmed about me as I can no doubt fare better than most others for what have I to lose? Nothing --but my life which, as I am a little of a fatalist, I shall lose when my time comes, Indians or no Indians. Shakespeare says "he jests at death who never felt a wound", that may be my case for which (do) I know?

I went down to Fayetteville on the 4th, rode down in the night. I passed some beautiful farms but more beautiful country than farms. Fayetteville is situated on the top of (a) hill about the size of that one below Albany and has a view on three dif't sides of three dif't vallies extending four or five miles each way--and away back in the distance are lofty mountains, forming a beautiful background. It is one of the loveliest, viewed (when) the sun is setting or rising that I ever saw. The town is small yet, but very tastefully laid out, and there is some fine houses, built something like Terre Haute---in-----d-----h-----a------p----e----(his words and spacing) at least I think so.

(The letter continues with the writing placed vertically over pages two and three of this letter.)

(Jeremy) Ogle is in Fayetteville and having been down there, I don't think, however, he is doing much, just getting into debt for tomorrow----again. I had an offer when I was in Fayetteville from (the) owner of the best store there--------- if I would quit Wilson. I told him I would see him again. I thought I would hold back and "look before I leapt". I want to get acquainted with the people and their manner of selling goods and etc. I think in about a year I will know all these things, then (I can) "Go ahead".

Bill Clayton and Young Fitch have stopped with an assortment of goods at Van Buren, a small town down on the Arkansas River and (they) are at the last advices trying to get a house but I don't think they will do much. Bill Clayton is too much of a----- -----him in Van Buren and another thinks the country there is overstocked with goods now and it is a bad time to buy goods, especially in a new store and a stranger at that, at least I think so.

I've read your letter over with mingled feelings of joy, somber joy to get your letter. (I) remembered when I thought how many many times I had grieved you and Mother too and to think how good you were to me.

'Tis true this place (as you say) is a land-----of worked miracles and though the hand of the Almighty---is in the lofty mountains and tremendous rocks that overhang the vallies yet the voice of his minister is seldom heard. Sunday is no more than any other day. We keep open the store the same thing as any other day and many times sell more goods on that day than any other. I see you say that Mr. Rutris(?) has "gone to that bosom from whence no troubles returneth." "May the turf rest lightly upon him."

Write me letters often and write them long and tell the girls to write, tell Abram to write to me too. Give my best respects to all enquiring friends.

Your affectionate son

S. Walter Case.

Notes on Letter 1:

1. Oakland and Neosho Territory are not precisely located but thought to be near the junction of the four states of Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri.

2. The Military Road, also known as Line Road, passes on, or near the boundary line of Benton County and the Indian

Territory, hence the name "Line Road". It is also known as the Old Military Road, having been cut out and established by the federal government from Fort Scott in Kansas to Fort Smith in Arkansas for the purpose of opening and establishing communications between those important points. In some places this road runs on the boundary line, especially at Maysville, and for a few miles south, but it lies mostly on the Benton County side. It passes through Maysville, Cherokee City and Silvan in Benton County (Goodspeed's History of Northwest Arkansas, p. 52).

3. Trade was likewise important to the Western Cherokees. Many voluntary immigrants of Cherokee and other tribes were poverty-stricken on arrival between 1833 and 1837, but some were more fortunate. Especially was the latter true of the Treaty Party whose members had their affairs in good order before coming west in 1837. Thus, some of them arrived in a solvent condition, such as Major Ridge and his son, John, who were able to begin merchandising, farming and livestock operations as soon as they settled on Honey Creek in the extreme northeast corner of present day Oklahoma. White traders, also, were involved in the economy of the Western Cherokees. Especially important was the money they received from the U. S. Government at a time when the currency circulating in the states was of value ("History of the Cherokees" by Oliver Knight p. 163 Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. 34, No. 2).

4. Three of the 1838-1839 wagon trains from the east came to the Fort Wayne area on Beattie's Prairie in 1839, commanded by Richard Taylor, John Benge and John Adair Bell. The big store of the Ridges was on Honey Creek and James Allen Thompson and Joshua Buffington had a big store near the old Fort in the 1840s. (Cherokee Pioneers, pg. 16, James Manford Carselowey.)

5. The Creek agency was on the north bank of the Arkansas River, nearly due north of where Muskogee is now, and the Creeks settled around the area where the Canadian and Arkansas Rivers converge.

6. Jeremiah Ogle was paid $12 for boarding jury and keeping jail in January 1839 (Washington County Court Records, p. 208, Book A). He is listed as head of the family in 1840 Sheriff's Census of Washington County.

7. This letter was postmarked at Vineyard, a small community near Evansville in the southwest part of Washington County. Vineyard was established as a post office in 1827 and this suggests the possibility that Oakland was perhaps closer to the southern part of the county rather than in

the northern part of Benton County, particularly as Goodspeed states that in 1838 there was a flood of merchants who moved into Evansville and brought in large stocks of goods to sell to the immigrant Cherokees.

8. Assuming this Wilson is Washington L. Wilson, it is unlikely that he bought property in 1839, as the first purchase by W. L. Wilson was Lot 3, Block 28, June 27, 1839, in Fayetteville, according to the old Deed Records in the Washington County Courthouse.

9. Case was not the only one who thought war was imminent. Archibald Yell, who was campaigning for governor in 1839-40, had been in the U. S. Congress in 1837 and advocated defense of Arkansas' western frontier. In January, 1838 he wrote the Gazette he had gotten the Secretary of War to agree to build a new garrison at Fort Smith. In June of 1838 he reminded Congress that the U. S. had moved approximately 66,000 Indian warriors west of the Mississippi River and was obligated to protect those states that bordered these savages (The Life of Archibald Yell, Melinda Meek, Arkansas Quarterly, Vol. XXVI, 1967). In August of 1838 General Matthew Arbuckle had 350 muskets cleaned and oiled and transported overland to Fayetteville and delivered to I. Meek, designated as military storekeeper, who was to hold them for use against the Cherokees (Five Civilized Tribes, Grant Foreman, p. 290).

Thomas Case, Esq.
Sam Case New Albany, Indiana
Politeness of W. R. Clayton

Fayetteville, October 11th 1838

My dear father

This will be handed to you by an old friend of mine by (the) name of William R. Clayton, he is just starting to New Albany from this place for the purpose of buying goods to fill up his stock down on the Choctaw line. He has, from his say so, been doing a large business, or rather a profitable one, and is going to bring Mrs. Clayton out with him. There will be another dissatisfied Woman to add to the already numerous list of them now in Arkansas, for it is impossible for any woman to be satisfied in a place fifteen miles from any house, as the place where he lives is.

You will probably be surprised at the unusual heading of this letter (being headed Fayetteville instead of Oakland) the simple reason of this is that I have quit keeping store for Wilson and have got a situation with a Mr. James Sutton of this place at an advanced salary. He is giving me three hundred and fifty dollars (350$) a year and goods at cost, etc. and board.

I wrote you a letter from Wilson's last week wherein I detailed all my reasons for this step.

However, I may as well give you a few of them here as the mails being so irregular you may get it firstly. Where Wilson lives is in the country and as I had never lived in the country it came very hard to me. There was no place for (me) to go on Sunday, no church or any place but a grocery and that same 4 or 5 miles off. And the grocerys in this country are altogether different than any grocery in the upper country. These grocerys being the most duggish, dirty holes you ever had any conception of, drunken Indians laying all about and everything having the appearance of the lowest state of society. There has been three men killed within the last two weeks within a compass of ten miles, two white men and one Indian--killed in drunken brawls.

Where I am now there is a great difference. The people being generally very civil and orderly, some being fine and have been well raised and all uncommonly friendly. There is also some pretentions of Society and the people are beginning to talk very strongly of erecting a church.

I was at a large camp meeting last Sunday on a mountain called Cane Hill held by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church members, they being the most numerous denomination in this part of the country. There was a great many people there, I suppose between fifteen hundred and two thousand were present and of all campings it took the lead of anything I ever saw, the Methodist shoutings were hardly a touch to it. The preaching however to me was rather poor and this being on the ground (small?) wonder.

I am boarding at the Fayetteville Hotel now, right by the celebrated landlord Jeremiah Ogle--probably you know this man, he used to live in Albany. Jemy is from all accounts as deep in debt here as he was in Albany his family being so extravagant. Krzy (?) taking the lead in the fashions, the table is just so-so. The reason of my boarding there was that he is in debt pretty deep to Mr. Sutton and me and the other clerk of Sutton have to board it out.

Tell Ann I will answer her letter just as soon as I can get a little time which will be in a few weeks as I am very busy at this time putting things to rights in my new situation. Mr. Sutton, the gentleman I am with now is an old bachelor and a tolerable fine fellow, something of the turn of McGregor. He does a business of about 20 thousand dollars a year or upwards. William Clayton will tell you the rest and about this country as he knows more about it than me, having travelled all through it in search of a situation for his store. I have wrote this

letter in very much of a hurry and it is very late at night now and Clayton starts early in the morning so I must draw it to a close.

Remember me to all that have not quite forgot

Your affectionate son

Stuart W. Case

P.S. The ring enclosed is for Rosanna, tell her to wear it for a keepsake (will do in place of the poetry she wrote for).

Walter Case

(Written across the top of page:) These small scissors are for Louisa to remember her brother with.

Stuart

Tell Ann and Jane and Elizabeth and Louisa to write to me, tell Mother I have not mentioned her name in this letter, but that is no sign I don't think of her, she is seldom out of my thoughts and whenever I think about going back home the pleasure of seeing her is always first in my mind.

SWC

Notes on Letter 2:

1. James Sutton, Kentuckian, sold goods on the corner later occupied by Achard & Company, and still later, the Boston Store. His store room and warehouse was 30 by 150 feet and he sold immense quantities of goods and bought everything the farmers brought to him. He had resided in Missouri prior to coming to Fayetteville. In 1850 he was 40 years old and was listed in that year's census as a merchant and living at Burnside Tavern. (Campbell's history, "100 Years in Fayetteville"; also Goodspeed's "History of Northwest Arkansas.)

2. The Mr. Wilson Stuart Case worked for is not known. Conceivably he is Washington L. Wilson because Wilson had a daughter, Sarah, who was born in Indiana in 1835. Case's letters imply the family knew Wilson, and in a later letter he mentions that Mrs. Wash Wilson is going to Albany to visit her father. Wilson is not listed in the Sheriff's census of 1839 but is in 1840 for Washington County. The Fayetteville Hotel, kept by Ogle, has not previously been mentioned to my knowledge. Ogle's propensity for accumulating debts is verified by the Washington County Circuit Court Records (Books C and D). In fact, at the February term, Sutton was suing him for debt, but dismissed

the case and in May he stated he was unwilling to further prosecute the case against Ogle. Sutton's suit was only one of many filed against Ogle for debt.

3. The Choctaw Line is probably the road laid out by Captain R. B. Marcy from Fort Smith to Fort Arbuckle. This road, for the first 150 miles, traversed the Santa Fe Route and the Choctaws have settled along the road for 120 miles out from Fort Smith (Five Civilized Tribes, p. 137).

Mr. Thomas Case Esq.
New Albany , Indiana
Postmarked Fayetteville Dec. 7

Fayetteville, Arkansas Dec 4th 38

Dearest Father and Mother,

I rec'd your last by the hands of Mr. Kelly who arrived here yesterday, safe and in good health, with everything he was entrusted with in "good order and well conditioned" as the bill of lading says. I have just finished reading your letter, for the fortieth time almost, and I have not felt as much pleasure for a long time as I experienced while reading it.

I most sincerely congratulate you, and all of you, on your brightening prospects, and most sincerely do I trust they may not be dim'd, but still continue to increase. My pleasure was damped by your account of your health, which you say is not as good as you could wish; you must not expose your self any more than is absolutely necessary, and I think your health will improve also, I hope so, at least.

As for Gen. Isham Key I can scarcely find words to express my hate, contempt and indignation against him; to think that a man who could feign such kindness! Such friendship! for another while living could, then in such a short time after he was no more (for fear of losing a petty sum of money) try to seize upon his clothes (which from time immemorial have been held sacred as the property of the friends of the deceas'd) and to do it in such an underhand way too, and after all to deny it, I don't know what others may think about it, but this much I say about it, the man who would thus act such a double faced party would do-----anything------. You speak of old Key's religion, as for that, to use a common phrase, 'tis "all my eye"--I know all about it; and if Gen. Key is imbued with the pure spirit of the Gospel, I say the Lord deliver me from such Christians! I can tell the general that his dark deeds, are not so well hid as he may imagine, let him beware-----Snodgrass any myself, or either of us, could "unfold a tale" which would blanch his cheeks, red as they commonly are. The hoary old Sinner! the drunken, dirty, lying old rascal! him a follower of the doc-

trines that Poll Serl's taught, excuse me for mentioning her, but you know the old saying "Birds of a feather will come in together,"the hold hipocrite, he as much as told me, that the only reason of his joining the Methodist Church was to get the custom of that denomination, and would often get mad if a person of the persuasion would not buy of him! the old ruffian--- and I care not who knows it, I don't think that Payton Key is any better, but probably I am not an impartial judge in his case, as I always did hate him. And for Culbertson, I suppose he was made for a man so let him pass.

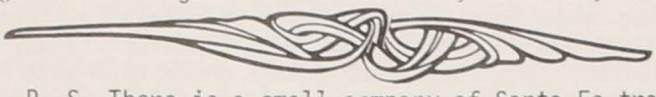
Tell mother I am very, very much obliged to her indeed, for her timely presents, and I do not know how I shall ever repay her for her many kind remembrances. I will try however and get something to send her in the spring by Mr. Sutton as he goes Eastward, to remind her of Stuart. Thank Abram for his kind letter, and tell him I will do my best though it is rather a bad chance here, for all the merchants buy their saddlery when they buy their goods, generally in 12 months credit, which would not suit him I think. Remember me to Rebecca, Bill, John and Charley and give Samson (?) alias Perry, a good hearty kiss for my sake, for I believe I want to see him the worst of any of you, also Lawrence and Tom, tell them to mind their Books and be good. Tell Louisa I have been looking for a letter from her for a long time, tell her to write me one anyway for a new Year's present. I will give Ann a good scolding too if she don't mind and write oftener, I wrote her a letter a short time ago, describing a wedding. Since that I have been to another and I shall not describe it till she writes to me and when she does write she must tell me all about the Christmas parties, Balls, etc. As for Sam and Elizabeth I have not a word to say to them, for I believe they have both forgot me, as they will neither of them write. I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll just fetch a Cherokee wife home with me, which will make them open their eyes, I guess, as Jonathan says. Harry Sanderson is working in Fayetteville now, boards at Ogle's and sleeps with me every night, he wishes to be remembered to you all and particularly to Minnerva Kirk. Harry is diperately in love with 'Nerva, and I believe writes to her.

Thaddeus Wilson (a brother of Henry Wilson) was elected a Bank Director (this session of the Legislature) of the State Bank of Arkansas, Branch at Fayetteville, the Wilsons are big men here, to what they were in Albany (this Thad Wilson was a deck hand on a steam boat once).

There is a great deal of talk here about a new Real Estate Bank! which is going into operation shortly. It is entirely on a new principle. I will try and explain it, a man has one quarter section land, well he has this land valued by persons appointed for that purpose (who by the by generally value very

high) and gives the Bank a mortgage on it, to extend twenty years, where upon the Bank pays over to this man half of the valuation, charging 6 pr. ct. for the money, for twenty years, without any other security, the man all this twenty years has the use of the land and money and can redeem it at the end of the time by paying the principle and interest. This I am aware is a very imperfect description of it, but I think (you) can form some kind of idea of it by it.

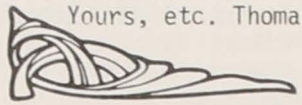
There is no news here I believe (of) any consequence, with the exception probably of the preparations, going on to defend the frontiers, there is two large forts building, one on the line between this county and the nation, the other at the site of old Fort Smith, below Van Buren on the Choctaw line--the latter will be one of the largest class of forts, and is intended, when finished to be the headquarters of the South Western division of the Army now under the command of Gen'l (Matthew) Arbuckle; the arms, ammunition, cannon etc. for the fort near here, are stored up here, under the command of a military store keeper. Great preparations are also making for the Emigrating Cherokees, who are daily expected, agents are riding all about the country, buying up provisions, corn, etc. their subsistence stands are being erected every ten miles all thru Missouri and Arkansas as depots for corn. Tis said that 1200 are within a few days march of here now, the whole number to come computed at 14 to 15 thousand souls. It is now very late and you forbid me from crossing any more of my letters or I think I would inflict another sheet on you, but I'll be merciful and quit now, tell the girls to give all my female acquaintances my best respects, and to wish them in my name a "Merry Christmas" and to each and all of you, I wish a most happy New Year and that ere another one rolls around we may all be together once again--alive and well, Your son, Father and Mother



S. Walter Case

P. S. There is a small company of Santa Fe traders agoing to start there in the Spring, on a trading excursion, tis said that fortunes are often made there, I want you to write me your opinion on it, the man that I am keeping store for is an old trader, he made his rise there.

Yours, etc. Thomas Case, S. Walter Case



Notes on Letter 3:

1. The Fayetteville Branch of the State Bank opened January 18, 1838. Its original board of directors consisted of Col. James McKissick, president, Alfred Henderson, Lodowick Brodie, Morris Wright, William Skelton, John Henry, William T. Lawrence and Alfred Wallace. William McK. Ball was elected cashier. Colonel McKissick soon resigned and

Jacob Walker was elected president in his place. The bank was located in a two-story brick building which stood on the site later occupied by the Van Winkle Hotel. The Arkansas Gazette, Oct. 30, 1839 described the bank building as follows: "It is a superb building, both the outside and the interior and is the work of mechanics settled in our city. The banking room is large and splendidly furnished, and the semicircular counter is one of the best specimens of painting we have ever seen. It is done in a style to represent the grain of several kinds of wood with a base of imitation marble. The wall has a heavy cornice of moulding, in plaster, with a beautiful ornament in the center of the ceiling. The doors are of handsomely finished wrought iron with locks which would baffle the most expert burglar; and the vaults are massive and substantial a sure defense against fire or robbery." (Ted R. Worley, Ark. Historical Quarterly Spring 1964, Vol. XXIII, No. 1)

To Mr. Thomas Case
New Albany, Indiana

Fayetteville Arks March 31st (1839)
Sunday evening 9 o'clock p.m.

Dear Father

Bearing in mind your request relative to writing often, I now take my pen in hand to let you and the family, and mother, know that I am still a dweller in the land of Arkansas, and also am in very good health, wishing most sincerely that these few lines may find you all in as good, if not better health than your humble servant is, though it would be hard to be in better health than I am now.

As you command me to write often you must not expect that the quality will be the same as 'twould be should they go seldomer. But I will try to make up in quantity what I lack in quality, though without the Indians get to killing themselves off faster than usual, or what is worse commence on us, I do not know when I'll find matter sufficient to write about every two weeks. However, I think should the latter of the above events come to pass (which from present appearances is not at all unlikely) I think I could manage to send you a tolerable respectable letter every week, which would be almost equal to a newspaper though I am thinking not quite worth so much.

The stir and bustle of the Cherokee emigration is beginning to die away, most of them having already arrived and taken up their abode in the far west, to all appearances well satisfied, though it is all one with them whether they are or not, they having nothing before them but "Hobson's choice." The agents are busily engaged in disposing of the waggons and horses which were used in bringing them out and the farm(ers) around

here laugh in their sleeves at the cheap bargains that they get out of them. The Nation, at present, is divided into two factions or parties, one of which is called the Ross party, which is by far the most numerous and is principally composed of full blooded Cherokees--they were opposed to the removal of themselves west. The treaty was made by the other party without their consent, the other party is called the Ridge party and is principally composed of half-breeds and mixed blood'd Indians, together with a great many white men who have married into the Nation. They being principally all well off. These small factions cannot bear the sight of each other and if they happen to meet anywhere there is always sure to be a fight.

By the by, what think you of marrying into the Nation? Fine way to make a fortune without much trouble, they always prefer a white man.

(The next paragraph is blotted:)

I am personally a
who has married
fortune by it since
his Lady out of the
at Van Buren. His lad
black as a common mulatto
there and is hands and
the lofty dames of
place and why a
blood in her veins
can look back to
much pride and
Indian, I've
who myself ----- hat would I am and the ----------
girls say ------- to bring them an Indian, ---------- no
difference how black she was, so she was rich in proportion.

Business here is dull, nothing doing at all, the merchants not having yet received the spring stock of goods but if reports be (right) we will soon have lots to do as I hear that the Arkansas river is rising, so we will have plenty of goods then and plenty of work too, of which I will be glad as I always get homesick when I have nothing to do. Love to Mother and the girls, also to Rebecca, and tell Abram to answer my letter. Respects to Sanderson if he has come and remember your very affectionate (I believe) son.

S. Walter Case

(Written across the first page: I look with much impatience for Ann's letter, tell her to make it a long one, also Janie, she owes me one.)

Notes on Letter 4:

It is easy to conjecture that Case is writing about G. W. Paschal who married John Ridge's sister, Sarah, and established a law practice in Van Buren. However, without the remainder to the missing paragraph, this amounts to sheer conjecture.

Fayetteville, Ark
August 6 25
To: Mr. Thomas Case Esqr.
New Albany, Indiana

Fayetteville, Sunday evening
August 4th '39

Dr Father and Mother

I Rec'd Ann's letter some days since but from a variety of causes have not answered it until now. My neglect however, did not come from any want of matter as there has been no lack of that for the last (few) weeks. Indeed, I am of opinion that the immense quantity of material on hand for writing has been one cause of my Neglect--fearing to commence on such a mass of News. But one cannot put it off always and so here I'll make a commencement and try and give you some idea of the ways and doings of the good people of this county and the country generally.

The state of the Cherokee Nation at this time is dreadful, a civil war is on the point of commencing. The Nation is divided into factions and the head of one part has been assassinated by the orders of the other. Where it will all end nobody knows, the parties have (are on the point of doing so) assembled their entire force with the intention of deciding the war by a single blow. Gen'l Arbuckle, the commander at Fort Gibson is trying his best to make peace between them. I trust his efforts may be crowned with Success.

Much alarm has been felt by the people of this country, Some families have left and some are leaving. Volunteer companies have been formed throughout this and the adjoining counties. The arms, ammunition, etc. in the Arsenal at this place have been distributed to the different volunteer companies so that almost every man is completely armed and altogether our town and country has a very warlike and savage appearance.

The Indian alarm has however been almost swallow'd up in the many murders which have lately taken place, for within the last five weeks in this county no less than fourteen persons have come to violent deaths, exclusive of three that were hung last Monday in Cane Hill. I had the hard or bad fortune as you may think proper to designate it, of being present at the last mentioned occurrence. An immense concourse of people were present on the occasion--say three thousand, including women,

children and Blacks--of which there was probably five hundred armed. These men were suspected of being the ones that murdered a whole family sometime since (Wright family). The evidence against them was entirely (so I understood) circumstancial and would not have hung them in a court of law, but they were men of bad character and the people were so excited that the voice of moderation was not heard at all. Poor fellows their last words were that they were innocent, but it availed not. (The) proceedings of this committee, that condemned these men were not characterized by that tumultuous and mobbish spirit that the general image of Lynch usually are. On the contrary, everything was conducted with patient coolness and propriety. The way they went into measures was this--there was a committee appointed, consisting of thirty men, some of whom were ministers of the Gospel and generally the first men of the county. Before these men the prisoners and witnesses were taken singly, the evidence reduced to writing and in the end summed up, read over, and the sense of the committee taken by vote, who was, with one exception unanimous for hanging all three of the men.

This, you will think a rather novel way of doing the thing, but it is the way that it was done then on Monday last, but what followed was strangest yet. After the men had hung some twenty minutes, one of the committee (a Methodist preacher) arose and read from a paper he held in his hand the sentences of different persons, in all about ten, commanding this of them--to leave their present places of residence and take up their line of mar(ch) out of this country and not to be found within two hundred miles east, or west, or north or south of Cane Hill under penalty of death.

These are a few of the tricks that Judge Lynch has been playing in the county and only a few, for it would take quires of paper to tell. Even Fayetteville, our own little peaceful village--so peaceful that almost every citizen goes loaded down with arms (two pistols and a knife moderate) has not been exempt from the Hon. Judge's sentences. Several men have been run off, the jail torn down, etc. (nothing but child's play).

Rather an unpleasant occurrence, that grew out of--------(blotted) happened here this day, three weeks ago, the particulars-----(blotted) would take too long to write. I will however------and give you a------(blotted). Some public spirited citizens took into their heads to drive------loafers from town and accordingly done so. Another pers----(blotted) of the day having expressed himself to the effect that the "per----(blotted) driven off were as good as those that drove them off" and --------(blotted). Now they, the Lynchers went in a bo(dy) to where this man was------(blotted) answered in which answer one of the Lyncher-----(blotted) a pistol pointed (at) the side of the man's head and snap'd it, the cap only exploded, upon this

the man took to his heels, the others following, some crying "shoot him", others "knock him down" and others, "kill the damn'd rascal". They got half way on the Square (the town is laid out like Terre Haute) there is a horse hitched, belonging to a brother-in-law of the man that was running. The foremost disciple of Judge Lynch made for this horse and was trying to mount when he was prevented by the brother-in-law. I know not (what) words passed between them, but this I know-----Lyncher drew his pistol and (two words illegible) his tracks, the man fell back, clasped his hands to his head and tumbled saying, "Oh God I am shot." Just as the Lyncher shot, the man threw a brick bat which struck him on the jaw (without material damage) however, When a brother of the Lyncher's threw (illegible) at this other man that threw first, which knock'd him dead. Then the Lyncher that shot first, he ran up to the one his brother had knocked down, draw'd his Bowie knife and drove it up to the haft in him.

This all happened within twenty yards of where I was at the time. I ran up to the man that was shot, he did not appear to be----(blotted) though his eyes were already glazed and the white foam was oozing slowly-----(blotted), he never spoke and in a minute or so, the other, I saw fall as all------(blotted) but being raised up and bled freely, he survived. It was to-night and 'twas the physician opinion that the wound was mortal but contrary to expectations he is now doing well and will get over it------who did this were the first men of the place they were-----(blotted) bail in the sum of ten thousand dollars.

Business is not as brisk as it was last spring and summer, hard times are just beginning to affect Arkansas. The crops are first rate, vegetables of all kinds numerous, though the summer has been the hottest within the memory of the oldest inhabitants. My health is very good and some times I get to thinking that I will come home this fall, more especially since this last Monday. They have put me out of concert of Arkansas altogether and I think I will leave here certain next spring and go to Texas.

Respects to all, love to Mother, Rebecca, John and Ann, Elizabeth, Sanderson and all the rest. A report has just reached here that the Indians have killed and scalped two men near the line on this side, as to the truth of it I can't say.

S.W.C.

Notes on Letter 5:

1. It is pretty obvious that the assassinations of Major and John Ridge and Elias Boudinot, leaders of the Cherokee Treaty Party on June 22, 1839 took second place in Case's mind to the more stirring events occurring closer to home.

2. Five members of the family of William Carter Wright living in an isolated two-room cabin west of Cane Hill were killed on June 15, and the cabin burned to conceal the evidence. The community formed the Cane Hill Independent Regulating Co. and became police, jury and judge. John Richmond, James Barnes and Jackson Turner were hanged the 29th of July, and William Bailey was hanged in December. Alfred Arrington, who disapproved of the type of justice the Regulators handed out, wrote of the event in his book "Lives and Adventures of the Desperadoes of the South West" but his account is considered to take liberty with the facts. J. F. Bates also wrote of the murders and his article was published in Vol. 4 (1917), Publications of the Arkansas Historical Association, under the title "Murders of the Wright Family Recollections" He believed that the guilty men were hanged. Rev. Alfred E. Carnahan, in "The Pyeattes and the Carnahans of Old Cane Hill" (WCHS Bulletin Series 1954) also comments on the events. A further source is "The Cane Hill Murders of 1839 in History and Literature" by Charles G. Williams, a graduate student in history at the University of Arkansas, published in Vol. 29, No. 3, 1970 Arkansas Historical Quarterly.

3. Goodspeed (p. 188-189) describes the Fayetteville episode thusly: "On one Sunday morning L. D. Pollock, Thomas Wagnon and one Curry, his brother-in-law, and J. Wagnon, all fairly respectable citizens of the county, came to Fayetteville and became engaged in a game of cards. This was reported to some of the citizens and Willis Wallace, his brother Riley, and two or three others, resolved to put a stop to the game. They went to where the men were playing and threatened them with arrest. This very naturally enraged them and a quarrel ensued. Wallace and his party were getting the better of the card players and Wagnon started to run away. He ran across the public square and passed out on the other side of town. All the party followed and Willis Wallace attempted to take Curry's horse from the rack on the square to pursue Wagnon. At this Curry pulled a pistol from his saddle-bags, but Wallace was too quick for him and without waiting for further demonstrations drew his own revolver and shot Curry dead.

"As he fired Pollock, who was close by, threw a stone, striking Wallace upon the head and knocking him down, whereupon Riley Wallace in a similar manner struck down Pollock. He remained unconscious for several seconds. Meantime Willis Wallace regained his feet and going up to Pollock plunged a bowie knife through his body, pinning him to the ground. It was at first thought that he was killed, but Dr. T. J. Pollard who had witnessed the fight from his window had him at once removed to the hotel,

dressed his wounds and by his skill in a few weeks restored him to health. Two or three years later (according to a letter from Sophia Sawyer, it was just a year later), Pollock and Riley Wallace met at a saloon in Fayetteville. Both instantly recognized that it was kill or be killed. Wallace drew first, but his pistol missed fire. Pollock was either too nervous or too drunk to take advantage of this accident and before he could fire Wallace drew a bowie knife and plunged it into his heart killing him instantly. He then fled the country and was never captured."

Willis Wallace was indicted for the murder of Curry, and his brother Alfred, S. G. Snead, David Walker and W. S. Oldham went his bail for $10,000 and he entered a plea of not guilty. When the case came up at the November, 1839 court term, he was found NOT guilty of manslaughter, but guilty of justifiable homicide, and acquitted. (Washington County Circuit Court Records, Book D, p. 41)

The Wallace family consisted of William, the father, and four sons: Willis S., Alfred, Leonard and Riley. Alfred opened a general store on the west side of the public square where for several years he carried on a prosperous business. Willis and another of the brothers were proprietors of a grocery. Willis went to Texas shortly after his acquittal.

In a letter dated August 28, 1840, Miss Sawyer related to Rev. David Greene: "Last Tuesday a man was murdered on the square in a grocery by the same Riley Wallace who stunned him last summer and whom Willis Wallace stabbed while apparently dead. After recovery this man made friends with Willis W., but now referred to the abuse and in the irritable language of a drunken man replied to Riley W. when he fired and missed, then struck with the pistol and on the man's retreat stabbed on the back, the knife passing the right side into a bone so firmly that Wallace braced himself by his foot and (pulled) twice with his whole force before releasing the knife, such had been the power of the fatal thrust...Esq. Pollock who was killed has left a wife and seven children in indigence...he was carried by us the next day followed by a few citizens to the grave."

It is also interesting to note, in this same letter, the description of Fayetteville written by John Rollin Ridge. "There are three groceries and eight stores in this town and two taverns, two taylor shops, three clocksmiths shops here and one silversmith shop, and there are a great many carpenters here and several lawyers in this town who have a great many cases to manage. The people are now putting

up a good many buildings here, a printing office, a jail, and a Masonic hall, in the lower part of this hall will be a school room."

It took until August 21 for news of the altercation to reach the state capitol, and on that date the editor requested further information: "FUSS AT FAYETTEVILLE: We received a letter from a friend at the west the other day stating that considerable disturbance had taken place at Fayetteville in consequence of an attempt of about 20 persons residing in Washington County to take an individual who had been bound over to stand his trial for killing another. He was protected by a party of the citizens who fortified themselves and prepared to stand for a siege rather than surrender the individuals they sought for. The assailants got possession of the cannon which was taken from them and spiked by the besieged...the affair terminated without bloodshed. This is the amount of what we learn by the letter which is not very explicit. We wish some friend at Fayetteville would give us a full and fair account of the matter so that we may understand all about it."

Mr. Thomas Case, Esquire
New Albany, Indiana

Fayetteville, Sunday morning, Sept. 30th (1839)

Dear Father

I am in your debt some two weeks in regard to writing but I have no excuse to offer as I have been actually too busy to write, being occupied every night until ten o'clock examining the Books and in the day time busy all the time. Mr. Sutton is doing a splendid business taking the lead altogether; for your satisfaction I will give you a transcript of the am't. of sales in one month, which were upwards of eight thousand dollars, all retail too.

Speaking of not writing, I don't know that I could have enlightened you much although events here transpired lately which would take volumes to illustrate rightly. I am not aware that it would be any great satisfaction for you to learn what they are and might excite some uneasiness in your's and Mother's feeling about me. Suffice it is "to say" that this county, and town in particular, has become one of the most lawless and uncivilized places in all creation. There is men here from Mexico, men from Iowa Territory and men from Texas, who all coincide in saying that its equal is not to be found.

Shooting, stabbing, knocking down and dragging out appear to be the order of the day at present in this place. In fact,

the Cherokee Nation is almost (to use a horse racer's phrase) distanced in the race for savageness--- (A) great many honest, well meaning men are leaving the country, selling their property at a considerable discount rather than to stay. Some going to Texas, some to Missouri.

Indeed for an unbiased person to look at Fayetteville as it is, he would think that it is the rendezvous for all the devils on the face of the earth--that this is the place where they all congregate.

(I) find there is some appearance of religion (among all this dross some little pure metal) but some, particularly the Methodists, have rendered themselves rather unpopular with the majority of the people by soliciting the slaves for contributions toward building their church.

Several Camp Meetings have lately been held in this vicinity but taken generally, have been productive of little good. The Methodists are even now in session, Camp Meeting-ing about five miles from this place, but caring little for anybody that will be there, I have not gone. Indeed, I scarcely go out at all, only to my boarding house. I preferred staying at the Store and writing this letter.

Speaking candidly, I never was in any place in my life where I had as little respect for the people generally as I have here.

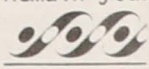
The Cherokee Indians are still fighting among themselves. Council after Council has been held and dissolved again, without effecting anything, each of the parties then remaining in a defensive attitude. One of the surviving chiefs, or braves of the Ridge party has gone on to Washington City to see if their "Great Father Martin" will do anything for them (it may be all right and good for Martin to be styled Great Father by the Indians, but if I was in his place I should be sorry for the morals of my children). Two of Ross' most distinguished Braves were found dead in the woods near his encampment, each with a single Bullet in him, done 'tis thought by some of the Ridges' men. This, as you know, is the legitimate mode of Indian warfare, and I should not be surprised if the war between the two parties doesn't degenerate into such skirmishing altogether unless Ross is killed, whose death will end the war.

On the tenth of October there is to be a general Review of the whole available force of Washington County at this place by order of Colonel Commandant Hon. A. Yell, Esq. Great anxiety and some little excitement is manifested here in regard to the trial of Wallace at the next court (which is in November) for the murder of Curry, of which I wrote you an account. For

my part I should not wonder if there is a general blowup as he will never submit to the law if they condemn him and besides has plenty of backing. As you may probably feel interested to know my intentions for the future all that I can say is that the only plan I have for the future as certain is to leave this country in the spring at any rate.

Love to Mother and the girls and tell the girls that I have subscribed for the "Saturday --------" for their benefit, please take it out and pay the postage.

I send you the Times and Advocate tolerably regular but have never received but one or two Albany papers since I left Wilson's. I don't care much about it but still one wants to see how the elections have gone, etc. Sanderson has gone to "Osceola Mission" to carry on business, he writes to me that he has cut many coats out and made remarkably good fits. I get lots of letters and papers and no little love (from) Terre Haute. The letters and papers from Billy Hodges, the love from Cousins Julia and Harriet Tew(?) and Aunt. They say if I will not go to Texas in the spring, but come there, that they will do what they can for me.

Crops of every kind in this country are first rate, every thing in abundance. Still 'tis sickly; more sickness than has ever been before, so the oldest settlers say, and now I must draw my letter to a close for it (has) really been with an ef-(fort) that I have written this far. It seems to me that the longer I stay away from home the more aversion I have to writing and I am really afraid that if I should stay away much longer I shall quit altogether, but what ever comes I shall never forget you all nor cease to remember my home, but Remain your son Stuart 

(Written vertically across the final page of the letter) I understand there is a little paper published in New Albany called the Aurora. I wish you would tell them to send up to me for a year and pay them for me if you please to. I will make it all right when I come. P. S. (written vertically and horizontally on first page) Upon reading this letter over to myself, I notice a great many passages which, was it known here that I wrote them, might make some noise, not that they are the less true, but for that reason the noise would be louder and as I don't care about kicking up dust 'till I am ready to leave I expect you may as well just keep this letter in the family. Respects to Abraham and Rebecca and all the children. Tell the girls they must not quit writing but keep their letters flying, etc. From where I am now writing I can see a room where there is a little girl just breathing her last, (I) can see her father and mother standing around the bed and the doctor getting on his

horse having given up all hope. She was young and pretty, lately from Missouri (town very sickly).

Notes on Letter 6:

Strangely enough, Case, who seemed to chronicle most of the leading events of the day, did not mention the 26-gun salute to Tennessee and Indiana who went Democratic. An unidentified writer thought it newsworthy enough to write to the Gazette and it was published September 18: "While I am addressing you this letter the artillery company, escorted by a corps of mounted gunmen, are proclaiming in peals of thunder the achievement of a Democratic Victory in Tennessee and Indiana. The turnout is imposing although the rain has been descending in torrents since morning."

Case's concern about the Wallace incident was apparently shared by others in Fayetteville, however, and one, signing himself FIAT JUSTICIA, answered the Gazette editor in a communication which was published September 4th but was pretty sketchy as to the events but lengthy as to the legal ramifications.

"Much excitement prevails in this county relative to an unfortunate affray which occurred at Fayetteville a short time since in which Mr. John Curry was killed by Mr. Willis S. Wallace. The writer of this will not pretend to give any facts in relation to this matter as it would be difficult to do so, and nor would it be proper since Mr. Wallace will be tried at our next circuit court and the circumstances fully investigated. After the occurrence Mr. Wallace surrendered himself and after an investigation before Messrs. McKissick and Washington, justices of the peace, residing in Fayetteville, was admitted to bail and gave bond in the sum of $10,000 for his appearance in court. This however, did not satisfy some who were under the impression that Mr. Wallace should not have been permitted by the justices to give bail hence the excitement."

There follows a report on a second hearing with Messrs. Thomas C. Wilson, McCamey, Townsend, Moore and Robinson, justices of the peace out of Fayetteville in which it is mentioned that Mr. Walker (probably David Walker) was the counselor for Mr. Wallace and continues:

"Matters here should rest. It has been set to rest by the opinion given by the afroesaid Wilson, McCamey, Moore and Robinson. The public should be satisfied and let the matter rest where it is now in the hands of the civil authorities...Let it not be said abroad that the good people

this county are too inconsiderate or too excitable to regard or to respect the laws of our land. Mobocracy should not prevail here or elsewhere and if it does our laws will be disregarded and persons will have no security for their lives or property. Whenever, and wherever, the laws of our country reach individuals, let those individuals rest in the custody of the law and the civil authority. More than this should not be required by an intelligent and reflecting people, nor should less be expected. For a criminal offense the laws of this state and the constitution of this and of every good and well regulated country guarantees to the humblest individual a right of trial by a jury of his fellowmen. This right should be inviolate. Much more might be said but it is deemed unnecessary, the writer of this hopes there is too much intelligence among the people of this county as to expect that notwithstanding the excitement they will act otherwise than as good citizens, as people at all times willing that the law should be administered by the proper authorities and that they oppose all violations of law and endeavor by their example to show that we are a people not disposed to favor anything which will favor opposition thereto.

FIAT JUSTICIA
Washington County Aug. 22, 1839

To
Thomas Case Esq.
New Albany, Indiana

Paid 23: Postmarked Fayetteville, Ark. April 10

Fayetteville, Arkansas April 8th 1840

To You All--Father, Mother, brothers and sisters

This day completes two long, long years since I left you for the land of the Stranger, and in memory of the parting time I now write to tell you that the scenes and adventures that I have encountered Since I left, though many and some few dangerous, has not banished the memory of home, though I but seldom speak of it, my thoughts are always hovering around that hallow'd spot.

None but those who have tried the experiment can have any adequate idea of the loveliness of home when in a far-off land. Everything connected with it--trifles light as air to anyone else--assume an importance and magnitude that none, but he who wanders away from home can sufficiently appreciate. With him, as he looks back through the long vista of days gone by to the home of his youth, mellow'd by distance into everything that is beautiful and to be admired. The many familiar faces of his

boyhood playmates rise up to his vision, their faults forgotten or softened down, and naught but their good qualities remembered. At such an hour as this the wanderer is supremely happy, and while busy memory is roaming through the past and lingering around the home of his brothers and sisters in a moment, like Selkirk, "He seems to be there."

Thus he dreams until, until the cold reality comes back upon him and he finds that mountains and rivers intervene between him and his dwelling place of the olden time. Many and Many such dreams as this have I had Since I have been in this country and only to awake and find it to be the "baseless fabric of a vision."

I know that I am much changed in personal appearance Since I saw you all last, but it seems to me sometimes that I am more changed in my way of thinking, that I have grown selfish and callous to anything save my own interest, but I suppose I am only a little older in the "ways of the world" and think, (as I heard a man express himself the other day, when accused of cheating) "that the world is only a large violin and that the smartest man got the sweetest music out of it."

Now to business. Mr. Jas. Sutton left this place about five weeks since for the East and is doubtless ere this in Philadelphia. I expect him back sometime in May. Immediately upon his return I will leave this place and, if I come home at all, I will be there sometime in June. But be it as it may, it will be useless to write to me any more after you receive this as long before a letter would reach this place I would be far away. I shall at the time I leave (say 10th May) have between five and six hundred dollars Arks money, which will cost me about ten per cent for Eastern funds--one of the benefits derived from old Jackson's tinkerings with the currency.

Should I come home I will bring Sanderson's clothes with me. Give him my best respects. Mrs. Wash Wilson will be on to see her father in May or June. Stephen Woodruff, the plane maker, is working as a house carpenter at Van Buren, a town on the Arkansas river some fifty miles from this place. He sent word up to me a short time ago that he was going home in May and wanted me to go with him. I subscribed for a Texas newspaper to come to Albany, I wish you would take it out and pay the postage until I return when I will make it all right.

This country is in a state of much agitation at this time -----(blotted) a deal of political excitement having been generated within the last two months. Almost everyone you see is armed to the teeth at all times, fights are frequent and angry disputes seem to be the order of the day. I have acquired within the last month rather an unenviable notoriety in this

place, much has been said relative to me and a certain young lady, not very creditable to the young lady's character and I don't know but what my departure may be hastened by it. I don't care as it is in Arkansas, but I don't want you to say anything about it to anybody without it was Sanderson who is partly acquainted with the leading circumstances.

The farmers have been planting corn for the last three weeks the trees are covered with leaves and the ground with flowers. I have at dif't times lately received letters from John Blaney, Alfred Ross, George Sapping and others. Request Sanderson to tell them that if I don't answer their letters in person I will respond to them in writing at the first place I stop at. Also tell him that Sally McGarrah is still waiting for him.

Your affectionate son and brother
S. Walter Cayce in need of a
friend to his---(illegible).

* * * * *

MEMORIES OF FAYETTEVILLE

Mrs. Paul Congour, Sr., formerly of Fayetteville, now living in Fort Smith, writes: "Thanks for the FLASHBACK with the picture of the Court house in it. We lived in 1904 where the old Montgomery Ward building was built across from the Courthouse. (Editor's note: This will be the new Courthouse Annex in 1976) Our home was later moved to West Dickson Street across from Highland Avenue. I remember the old Courthouse in the middle of the square, with the old board fence around it, and where farmers tied their horses and teams when they came to town. On the Southeast corner was a water box for the horses. The fire bell was on the Southeast corner. It sounded the Curfew at 8 o'clock and at 8:30 for all young under age 18 to go home. The fire bell was later moved to the University.

"Ice cream was five cents plain--with caramel or chocolate 15 cents. A good dinner was 15 to 25 cents. That was in the early 1900's in my home town, Fayetteville."

Have you compiled your Washington County family history?
Submit it to FLASHBACK.

A SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC

BY ROBERT G. WINN

When we think of the building of the railroad through the Ozarks, we are apt to romanticize the period, regarding only the finished product and the great advantages it offered toward the development of the country. If we pause to consider the actual conditions under which the road was built, we discover a much more drab and sordid aspect of the operation.

This was at the time of the great railroad barons who operated without government restraints of any kind. Some of these men were ruthless opportunists with interests centered in accumulating fortunes for themselves, at the expense of the less fortunate who worked in their enterprises. The American labor movement was not yet organized, leaving the barons with complete authority over the workers.

The Emancipation Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln had been issued less than twenty years before the beginning of the railroad. The emancipated slaves found themselves free in name, but at a complete loss about managing their affairs or shaping their destiny. Many were illiterate plantation workers conditioned to obey the dictates of their masters; consequently, when these men were recruited to work on the railroad they merely exchanged servitude to their masters for comparable control by the railroad barons. Their previous lives as slaves had allowed them little opportunity to become skilled at any trade except the hard manual labor required in the construction of railroads. Few of them could read or write their own name if, indeed, they had a name. As slaves they had had only the name of their master. Many freed men assumed the names of their former owners; their home ties were fragile if they had any place at all to call home. Among these hapless wanderers, the railroad builders found recruitment of cheap labor easy. They were located in camps along the route of the construction where they lived under conditions of minimum comfort and convenience.

It is not surprising, then, that when an epidemic of smallpox struck these camps, in the winter of 1879 or 1880, the men fell prey to the ravages of that dread disease. The primitive

conditions under which the camps were operated and the lack of sanitary facilities made the situation worse. Medical assistance was practically nil. No vaccine was available. Once the disease was contracted, very little could be done for the victim other than to minimize his suffering until he either recovered or succumbed. Nobody could escape from the camps once the disease had struck and the place was contaminated. Men exposed were not permitted to ride the train away from the site; and none of the few local inhabitants would open their doors to them. Work on the road came to a virtual standstill until the ravage of the disease ran its course.

Mrs. Gertrude Gregg Yerton of Fayetteville recalls that her father, Frederick D. Gregg, was postmaster at Summit Home (now Winslow) at the time. The post office was in the house now (1976) occupied by Mrs. Vada Combs, across the street from the Community Church (formerly Christian). At that time the building consisted of two large rooms. (This is thought to be the oldest residence now standing in Winslow.) Outgoing mail was put through a slot cut in the door where it fell into a receptacle and was fumigated before being handled by the postmaster. Apparently the fumigation was effective because Mr. Gregg did not contract the disease. Incoming mail was placed outside the building where it was picked up by some member of the camp.

Far more victims died than survived. As no outside help was available those who succumbed had to be buried by camp members who were able to dispose of the bodies. Little ceremony was observed in doing this. So far as can be learned, four burial sites were used for the black victims who died in the camps near Winslow, and only one "smallpox graveyard" for the whites. Cornelius Anderson who was raised in the valley along the Sunset road, east of Winslow, was a small boy at the time of the epidemic. He said he remembered walking with his mother along a road, beside the creek, where the Sunset bridge crosses the stream just east of Highway 71, and seeing the burial of some of these victims. As nearly as he can remember, about fifteen bodies were thrown into one long trench and covered with dirt. The blankets on which the men had died were wrapped around the dead bodies. This was their only coffin.

A second burial site, shown to Mrs. Yerton by her father, is at the top of the hill above the railroad tunnel at Winslow. Neither the exact location of this trench nor the precise number of men buried here is known--only that their bodies were thrown into a single long trench and covered, with no marker to indicate the location.

Farther south, near Number 3 bridge on the Frisco, just north of Schaberg, is a railroad fill long known as "The African Center". The name derived from the fact that men who died in the

nearby camp were dumped into the place and their bodies covered to become a part of the foundation upon which the railroad was built. A second fill, a short distance from the African Center, is said to contain more bodies. The exact location of this second fill is uncertain.

The known burial sites above mentioned contain the bodies of black men. This knowledge leads to the speculation that most of the laborers along this part of the road were Negroes. Only one location is known to exist where the white victims were buried. This place was known in the early days simply as "The Smallpox Graveyard." It is a spot a few hundred yards from the railroad, just southeast of the tunnel. When Omer Winn, as a teen-aged boy, first saw this place, he counted five separate graves, each marked with a headstone of native rock. Only one of these stones had a name carved into it--the name was "King." No other names or dates were found at that time; when Mr. Winn again visited the site in the 1950s, the stone bearing the name "King" was gone. This tiny graveyard is now completely overgrown and lost in the forest. All that remains is a pile of stone. Only a few people now living know that this pile of stone marks the location of the graves of some of those unfortunate men who died in the smallpox epidemic.

* * * * * *

CORRECTION

Bessie Priester, 1055 South Stewart Avenue, Springfield, MO 65804 sends a correction to her Query in May FLASHBACK. "John Wm. Burgess, b. Sept. 14, 1826 (where born); d. Sept. 14, 1856 (where buried); m. Mar. 18, 1847 Manerva (Gass) Burgess, b. 11 May 1830, Tennessee; d. 1905, Wright County, buried Hartville, Missouri. Their children: William, b. Sept. 27, 1849, Tenn. d. Oct. 6, 1917, Washington State; Samuel, b. April 24, 1851, Washington County, Ark., d. May 3, 1854; Nancy Ann, b. Apr. 15, 1853; John, b. Aug. 17, 1855; Betty Jane, b. Jan. 13, 1857, d. Nov. 19, 1880. Ann Eliza (Todd) Burgess, b. Feb. 6, 1849 in Washington County, Ark., d. Oct. 30, 1939, is buried with William Burgess in Puyallup Cemetery in Washington State. I wish to know: John Burgess' father, mother, brothers, sisters, and place of birth and burial. Also Manerva Gass' father, mother, sisters, brothers and what county in Tennessee she was born in. Where are Ann Eliza Todd family records?"

THE STORY OF CLYDE

BY CONRAD RUSSELL

The community of Clyde, located about one mile south of Cane Hill, is another community that has had more than one name.

About 1840 a log school house was built at the lower end of the hill, near where Clyde is now. A well-known minister and educator, the Rev. Samuel Newton, taught there for a number of years. The school was called Elm Grove School.

The village that grew up near the school was at first called "Newton" for the Reverend Newton. From Newton it became "New Town."

The first store was a general merchandise store built in 1834 and operated by James B. Russell. During the Civil War, General Blunt and his officers called the village "Russellville" and "Newberg." After the war, the name "New Town" was back in use.

There were two other stores in New Town: Andrew Reed operated a store, and Mrs. Bess Burns and Mrs. Dana Yoe operated a store and millinery shop.

In 1850, a school for girls was opened in a frame building believed to have been located where Highway 45 passes behind the old store building still standing in Clyde. A well-known educator, Professor Thomas G. McCollough, was at the head of this school. Soon students were coming from adjoining counties and from Indian Territory. Because it was in Cane Hill Township, the school was called "Cane Hill Female Seminary." More building was then necessary. On December 10, 1852, the school was chartered by an act of the legislature. In 1856 a new two-story building was erected, and a library and music department were added.

To this frontier school Miss Mary Beller, who had just graduated in music in New York City, brought her Chickering grand piano and took charge of the music department in the Seminary.

A post office was established, February 10, 1887, with W. C. Russell as postmaster. Subsequent postmasters were: James R. Reed, May 26, 1890; Dana L. Yoe, May 7, 1894; Andrew B. Reed, Mar. 31, 1899; Wm. J. David, Feb. 9, 1904; Bessie Burns, Mar. 17, 1906; L. H. Yates, Mar. 15, 1910; Robert Stephens, Aug. 12, 1911; W. W. Yates, Aug. 11, 1913; and Stanley W. Yates, Nov. 7, 1924. The post office was called "Clyde", for Clyde Irwin who lived across the road.

Some of the earliest settlers in New Town were Carter, Braly, Yates, Palmer, Carroll, Parker, Irwin, Rodgers, Trewhitt, Reed, Braly, Houston, Cox, and David. There are probably others whose names I do not know.

During the war, New Town was burned by federal soldiers and bushwhackers. When the people heard that their homes, stores, and schools were to be burned, they carried out, and secreted, as much food, clothing and bedding as possible. A cave nearby was the main hiding place.

Mrs. Malinda Yates was just a young woman at the time and remembered (and recorded) much of the story of hardship and hunger after the burning. This and other effects of the Civil War years will be the subject for a future story.

The Church at Clyde

Mrs. Yates was educated in the Female Seminary, and she taught there for a time. When times were better, and schools were in operation again Mrs. Yates was employed to teach in a building erected after the war. This building stood near the site of the old feed mill and garage, still standing west of the highway. Her contract required her to teach six hours per day and five days per week, at a salary of $10 per month. She was instructed to keep order in the school, without showing any partiality with the children, and not to be ill and crabbed with same. Her arithmetic text book had been hand written by a Mr. Rutherford in 1811. Mrs. Benton has this book now.

Miss Malinda Russell, the daughter of George and Mary Wallis Russell, was married to James Yates in 1855. Mr. Yates was a veteran of the Mexican War, a pioneer settler, and ancestor of the Yates family of Clyde, Ark. Sometime near the turn of the century Mrs. Malinda Yates bought the Russell store. Her son, L. H. Yates, operated the store for a number of years. He also operated a cannery in the village.

In 1874, 18 members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at Cane Hill, who lived in the New Town area, withdrew and organ-

ized a Cumberland Presbyterian Church there. Church and school used the same building. The Rev. Nathan Hanks, J. A. Knox and Sam Benton Reed were ministers who worked there. Also some of the ministers at Cane Hill served the Clyde church.

Clyde today is a quiet community of modern homes. The water supply comes from the Braly Spring, which flows from the foot of a small hill a few hundred yards southwest of the town. It is now owned by Adron and Marie Yates Benton. In early days, this spring was the community refrigerator. A log springhouse built over the spring, with a basin through the center through which cold spring water flowed, was where families kept milk, butter and other food.

Along the spring branch, which flowed to a hollow walnut log watering trough, was a thick growth of willow trees and brush. In this growth, the boys of the community would hide and watch Frank and Jesse James water their horses when they came to visit their sister, Mrs. Barbara Palmer. According to Mrs. Yates' records, the Palmers were good neighbors and friends.

The community centers around a white frame church, which was probably built between 1910 and 1918 to replace the old building. Mr. William Trewhitt gave the lot on which the church was built. Mr. W. W. Yates was in charge of construction. Some of the ladies of the church planted, cultivated, and harvested a tomato crop, and Mr. Trewhitt furnished the land and hauled the tomatoes to the village cannery. The canned tomatoes were sold and the money given to the building fund.

According to available information, the land on which Clyde stands was owned by Mr. W. G. Parker. Mr. Parker was a blacksmith and operated a shop in Clyde for many years. When he was old, his son, W. J. Parker (called Billy by his many friends), took over the shop and carried on for many more years. He was the last backsmith in the area.

Many things which once were necessary to life in the country are gone, and soon there will be no one who remembers.

(My thanks to Mrs. Adron Benton, W. L. and J. B. Trewhitt for their help in getting information for this story. CR)

Do you have a good story about Washington County's early history? Submit it to FLASHBACK.

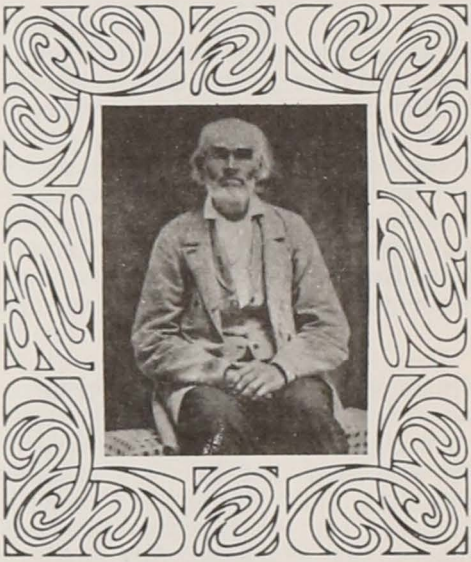
THE REVEREND JOHN HOLCOMBE

BY ELIZABETH DUPREE ELLIS

1976 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the death of the Reverend John Holcombe, beloved pastor of the Regular (Primitive) Baptist Church at Shiloh (Springdale), Arkansas. Through the years he has been known as the "Founder of Springdale" and his son, Joseph Holcomb (he dropped the "e") as the "Father of Springdale."

The following obituary from the "Weekly Democrat" of Fayetteville, Arkansas, on Dec. 23, 1876, one of several appearing at the time of John Holcombe's death, was written by A. G. Smith, one of two men who succeeded him as co-pastors of the Regular Baptist Church at Springdale.

OBITUARY



The Rev. John Holcombe

According to a dispensation of Providence we were called to witness the death of our aged but very highly esteemed citizen and dearly beloved brother, John Holcombe, who departed this life on Saturday morning, the 9th inst., after three short days confinement to his bed.

Elder John Holcombe was a native of South Carolina, and was born December 10, 1797. He emigrated to Kentucky when but a youth and shortly after to the State of Indiana, where, at the age of twenty-three years, he married a lady by the name of Dorothy Wilbanks, on the 24th day of July 1823. They becoming one flesh were the parents of sixteen children, eleven of whom are surviving, and are noted for their honesty, industry, and economy; and to these qualities are added benevolence, soberness and truth. All these, wielded by superior ability, make them ornaments to the best society.

Elder John Holcombe professed a hope in Christ before he was married, and joined the Regular Baptist church in southern Indiana, and in the Salem association. Afterwards he moved to Fulton County, Illinois, and commenced preaching in the bounds

of the Spoon River Association. About the year 1832 he emigrated to Washington County, Arkansas, and was ordained an Elder, and set apart for the work of the West Fork Church of Regular Baptist in the year 1840. In the year he constituted Shiloh church upon fourteen members, and the Lord, through him, making his labors efficient, it was increased to one hundred and twenty-four members, he being its pastor from its constitution until his death. Thus he labored in the ministry in the vineyard of the Lord for over forty years, in season and out of season always abounding in the work of the Lord, preaching some of the time to four churches, riding eighty miles per week, and never asking or receiving a single dollar for all his services. Repentance and a free salvation through Christ, feeding the sheep and feeding the lambs, and calling on sinners to turn to the Lord, were his delightful themes. He was an able defender of the truth, and was noted for his clear conception of Baptist discipline and Baptist order, and, when unhappy differences were looming up he was always called on to repel the gathering storm. He organized many churches, ordained many elders and baptized a great many persons, while all the time the Lord prospered the labors of his hands in the accumulation of money and goods, and gave him a benevolent heart, so that he contributed freely to the erection of churches and Schoolhouses, maintaining associations, and feeding the poor and needy generally. He was admired by all for his integrity, his firmness, and the tenacity that he displayed in contending for and practicing out the doctrine and discipline of the primitive Baptist, never having belonged to any other organization, never faltering under the pressure of the isms of men.

Thus he lived and thus he died, one day before his seventy-ninth year, closed in the triumphs of a living faith, and we say that he fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith, and is now wearing the crown that is laid up for all them that love his appearance. Let his many acquaintances say that he has gone to shine forth in the kingdom of his Father. Let his brethren say amen, for he has ceased from his labors, and his works follow him. Let his sisters rejoice and be glad, for great is his reward in Heaven. Let his children weep not as they would weep for those that have no hope, but let them press onward and upward with unyielding zeal and devotion, until they shall all be gathered Home, and, as one family, sing the new song forever and ever.

A. G. Smith

Springdale, Ark., Dec. 14, 1876
(Bentonville Advance and Fayetteville Sentinel please copy.)

Addenda:

The newspaper obituary leaves blank the year in which the Regular Baptist Church at Shiloh was constituted. The Shiloh

Church's "Regular Baptist Journal" states: "We Elders, Samuel Wheat of Wareagle (sic) Church, William Poston of Union Church, John Holcombe of West Fork Church, Deacons John Wood of the same, Berry D. Graham of the Same, Composing the Presbytery, do certify that we did on the 22nd day of August 1840 Procede (sic) to Constitute the Foregoing Brethering (sic) and Sisters upon the Acknowledged fact into a Church Capacity by the Authority of the Regular Baptist Churches to which we Severly (sic) belong, in virtue (whereof) we have clothed them with Authority to Transact Business as a Church. In Testimony whereof we have caused our names to be set." (Page "-O-". The capital letters are transcribed as they appear in the Journal.)

The Rev. John Holcombe had brought his family to the West Fork area from Gibson County, Ind., in 1839, having moved back to Indiana from Fulton County, Ill. for several years. An article appearing in an early issue of FLASHBACK, Number 3, May, 1951, a re-print of Kennedy Deaver's 1934 High School Valedictory Address, "Sidelights on Springdale's Early History," has the following information: "...In 1840 William Davison Quinton settled the 80-acre tract which was the foundation of the town of Springdale. Mr. Quinton, together with Rev. John Holcombe, came to this section from the Spoon River Association in Illinois. Rev. Holcombe homesteaded a tract of land near West Fork and established the West Fork Primitive Baptist Association. About two years later Quinton and Holcombe exchanged homesteads. In 1843 the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church was built and Rev. Holcombe chosen as the first regular pastor." (This information from the first page of a three-page article. The pages of early issues of FLASHBACK were not numbered.)

On March 10, 1843 William Davison Quinton, an assignee of Spencer Forby Fine, had acquired by Patent from President John Tyler the eighty-acre tract which the Deaver article referred to as the "foundation of Springdale." On October 7, 1843 John Holcombe purchased these eighty acres from William D. Quinton for "five hundred dollars and other considerations." In the early 1930's, Miss Jobelle Holcombe and Mrs. E. F. Ellis, of Fayetteville, granddaughters of the Rev. John Holcombe, presented the original land grant issued to William D. Quinton by President Tyler to the Springdale Public Library, where, in 1976, it is preserved framed under glass. The document had been kept for many years by their father, Joseph Holcomb.

The "History of Northwest Arkansas," published in 1889 by the Goodspeed Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois, tells of the "earliest settlers ... about Springdale's site." "Many of these were adherents of the Primitive Baptist faith, and soon after their arrival held meetings at various places, and among the first visiting preachers were Ref. James Mayfield and Rev. John Holcombe (he retained the final e)." (Page 257). "The

church was organized in 1840 and given the Biblical name Shiloh ...They soon erected a log church, and in 1843 found their first regular pastor in the person of Rev. John Holcombe, who bought of W. D. Quinton and entered all the present plat of Springdale, and more, to the amount of 640 acres." (Page 258)

The Deaver article relates that "For over 20 years after the building of the church Rev. John Holcombe, Shelby Fitzgerald, and their families and employees were the only people living in what is now Springdale. In 1868 Rev. Holcombe laid out the original town of Springdale...Emma Avenue was named by Joseph Holcomb, when he platted the present town, in honor of Miss Emma Dupree, his step-daughter. Holcomb Street was named after the family." (This information also from the first page of the three-page article.)

In an article appearing in FLASHBACK, Vol. V, No. 6, December, 1955 "Springdale's Public Square," Thomas Rothrock related that Shiloh (Springdale) was located by John Holcombe, and that Blocks 1 to 12 were surveyed and platted by the county surveyor on July 14, 1868. (This on the first page of a three-page article.)

Several entries from the Shiloh Church's "Regular Baptist Journal" are of special interest and are here copied verbatim:

These entries appear under "Rule of decorum of the Regular Baptist": "The church shall chose (sic) a moderator for the day...It shall be the duty of the moderator to Keepe (sic) order and state motions made and seconded." (The page on which these entries appear is not numbered. A moderator, of course, was not necessarily a minister.)

And: "Owing to the Death and burial Service of our Pastor, Eld. Jno. Holcombe, the church failed to meet in conference in Dec. 1876. (Page 210)

"Saturday before the 2nd Sabbath in January 1877 the church met and after worship proceeded to business...Chose Elds. N. F. Goodrich and A. G. Smith as our Pastors." (Page 211)

The above entries were also given in FLASHBACK, Vol. XVI, No. 2. May, 1966: "Records of the Shiloh Baptist Church, 6th Installment." (Page 17)

It is no doubt indicative of the esteem and affection in which the Rev. John Holcombe was held that his name appears many times in the pages of FLASHBACK as having been the officiating minister at early marriages in Washington County.

E. D. E.

ROTHROCK - GARDENER AND SCRIBE

BY BILLIE JINES

Horticulture and history might appear to be dissimilar, and it might seem unlikely for the same person to have been equally interested in the two.

Yet those who knew Thomas Rothrock of Springdale find his dual interest easy to understand. His life's work, horticulture, is both an art and a science, as is the history recorded by man, which was Tom's labor of love for many years. Both of them require research, the actual utilization of facts, an occupation for a man such as Tom who appreciated facts far more than myths and who was willing to apply those facts, both in the orchard and at the typewriter.

Thomas Rothrock
1896-1975

Born September 15, 1896 at Burnside, Louisiana, he was the only child of Irvin R. and Michael Anna Rothrock. The family lived in Chicago and Baltimore before locating near Springdale in 1910 when Tom was 13.

In one of his historical articles, "A King That Was", Tom recounted the story of the apple industry in Arkansas and its decline and fall. The article, which appeared in the Winter 1974 issue of ARKANSAS HISTORICAL QUARTERLY, told how the original Rothrock farm in 1910 had 75 acres of apple orchard. These had not been profitable to the previous owner, but Tom's father, a chemist, had the soil analyzed and then applied fertilizer according to the orchard's need. Vetch was sowed as a cover crop that fall. The next year, 1911, the yield of apples was large and profitable. He also recalled how spraying was sometimes done by moonlight, following ten hours of daylight work. Thus Tom learned early the discipline of work and the importance of applying scientific finds in the field of horticulture.

He was to share this knowledge and interest by being an active member of the Arkansas State Horticultural Society, attending more than 50 annual meetings, serving in the offices of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and member of the board of directors, and inspiring the State Horticultural Society in 1966 to present him with a Recognition Award "for a lifetime in Horticulture as a fruit grower--for council and suggestions to fellow growers--for cooperation in research

projects - for assistance to extension workers - for contributions and leadership."

Despite all this, horticultural interests did not absorb Tom Rothrock completely. During World War I he served with the infantry of the 35th Division, the same division in which former President Harry Truman was a captain of Light Field Artillery. In 1922, Tom was graduated with a degree in horticulture from Kansas State University and, in his words, "came home to the Ozarks to grow apples and grapes as a vocation."

He was married in 1925 to Ola Stephenson in Okemah, Oklahoma. They became the parents of three sons: Dr. I. A. Rothrock, an M. D. of Lawrence, Kansas; Dr. Steve Rothrock, a chemist of St. Louis, Missouri; and Professor Richard Rothrock of Arcata, California. Mrs. Rothrock died in 1949. In 1951, Tom married Velma Hedges Smith of Oklahoma City. She remained his constant companion until his death, August 23, 1975, and has continued as an ardent fan of his historical writing.

Through the years, Tom had maintained an interest in writing. He tried some fiction, and two of his short stories were included in anthologies, a high compliment to any writer. Some 30 years ago, Tom Rothrock and Bill Gulick (of cinema and Saturday Evening Post fame) collaborated on two book-lengths for boys. Plans had been worked out with the publishers for other historically-based stories, but alas! the advent of television swept away the market for such books for youths.

Other books were to follow, though, all of historical content. One of these, "Wilderness to Statehood with William E. Woodruff," was published by Tom in 1962, after an unbelievably tedious ordeal involving the research. Living on the farm, in sight of the towers of Old Main on the University of Arkansas campus, Tom went back and forth to the U of A Library to gather data out of the microfilmed copies of the Arkansas Gazette. The book itself covered Arkansas Gazette news accounts of Arkansas history from 1819 when Woodruff started the Gazette, to 1836, when Arkansas became a state. No one who has not tried to read old newsprint through a microfilm reader could realize the time such a project demanded, particularly in light of the fact that one's eyes can only hold out at such reading a short time at one sitting.

Ironically, when the handsomely-bound and gold-inscribed book came off the press, it was ignored by the Arkansas Gazette but was much sought after by others. "I regret," said Mrs. Rothrock recently, "that we did not have more copies of that book printed." It was a sell-out. After all the copies were gone, an order came in from what Tom considered one of the two most prestigious libraries in the United States. He wrote to one of

his sons to ask him to let the library have his copy, promising that the son could, one day, have the author's only remaining copy.

The modest Tom Rothrock, deacon, and long-time Sunday School teacher at Johnson Baptist Church, sometimes put a footnote to any comment about Bible studies, denying that he, himself, was to be considered a Bible scholar, but family and friends would not have agreed. One of his books, OLD TESTAMENT FOR LAY READERS, published in 1960, attests to his own careful study of the scriptures. Out of the Old Testament he prepared what he said had been "an earnest attempt to present the essential elements of the Old Testament in a chronological and clear manner. The books which have little or nothing to do with the main stream of the Old Testament story in general and the coming of Christ in particular, were omitted from the main story but briefly included at the last, he pointed out.

Aware for some time in 1975 that his work was soon to be finished, Tom did not discuss that prospect with his family, preferring to pursue his historical research and writing instead. Some of the latter was published after his death. Yet, in his own superb writing, he put down, in a few lines, his thoughts about dying. And in his own way, he left this message for his beloved wife, Velma, to find. She had taken down his suit and was preparing to have it cleaned to be placed on him. Looking through the pockets, she found there a scrap of paper on which he had penned these words: "When the Reaper comes for me, as it must, my body will lie in bed, but I'll be standing by a tall oak with the breeze on me and the limitless blue above. For the soul does not die. The Spirit of the Infinite will come and the soul will grow in wisdom and understanding beyond what could be before. So mote it be."

There was no date on the writing, but later, in a journal in which he sometimes entered his thoughts, the family found the same words dated May 25--three months before his departure.

In that same journal, Tom had prepared a "report card" for mankind. It was headed: "An attempted grading of the accomplishments of man." He had given A+ on both arts and technology; A on both economics and medical services; B on government and law; C on morality and ethics; and a D on wisdom.

Mrs. Rothrock takes pride in the fact that some of the works of history recorded by Tom were commissioned by Dr. Walter L. Brown, chairman of the U of A's Department of History and editor of the Arkansas Historical Quarterly. A book entitled THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS'S OLD MAIN was one of these and was especially written for the Centennial Observance at the U. of A. and was also published in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly.

There occurred an unfortunate oversight by the publishers of one book. When the First Baptist Church of Springdale was preparing to observe its centennial in 1970, Tom Rothrock was asked to author a book of history of the church. Approximately a year of research and writing were done by Tom in preparing the book. At last the manuscript was completed and turned over to church officials. Soon, a handsomely bound book, replete with numerous photographs, was off the press--but the name of the author had unintentionally been omitted. At a business meeting later, the church passed a resolution authorizing a letter of thanks to Tom for compiling the centennial history, including an apology for the omission of his name. In the letter it was pointed out that some day the book will be a collector's item. Unfortunately, another generation will not know who researched and wrote it.

The book JOHN BROWN OF ARKANSAS was co-authored by Tom Rothrock and Ralph C. Kennedy, Jr., chairman of the arts and literature division of John Brown University of Siloam Springs, and is a biography of the founder of JBU.

Numerous honors went to Tom in his later years. An "Award for Distinguished Service" from the Sunday School Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, cited him for more than 25 years of service as a Sunday School worker. Kansas State University named him to the Golden K Alumni Club in recognition of the 50th anniversary of his graduation. Also, he observed his 50th anniversary in both the Springdale Masonic Lodge and the American Legion Post. Two years ago, a long-time friend of Tom's sent a check for $400.00 to the State Historical Society. He stipulated that it was to provide two $200.00 permanent memberships--one for the donor's father, and one for Tom Rothrock who, he pointed out, had done "a lot for the Historical Quarterly in addition to his other literary productions."

In his final months, Tom had researched and written articles for three publications: the state quarterly, and the official publications of both the Washington and Benton County Historical Societies. Because of Tom, these things are now preserved for posterity.

As a fellow writer who belonged to the same writers' club as Tom and Velma for a quarter of a century, this author would vouch for the accuracy of the facts contained in his articles. His viewpoint on the recording of history is seen in a single sentence found in his journal. It is not dated, nor credited, so the words may, or may not, have been originated by Tom, but they undoubtedly meant something to him. They say:

"God Himself cannot change the past but men do."

QUERIES

Mrs. Charlotte Borjesson, P. O. Box 704, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707 inquires: "I've known for 38 years I was part Indian--Grandpa told me so when we went gold panning, and I just proved it six months ago. His name was Arden Crosby BIGGERSTAFF. Father: Talbert (or Tolbert) J. Biggerstaff (also known as Talbert Edward Biggerstaff. Mother: Harriet WHITLEY. They, also, were from Arkansas. I've written to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state capital in Arkansas. (I even tried Texas twice.) No dice. Nothing. Grandpa told me three things: (1) We were Indian; (2) we were Cherokees; and (3) we (he) was from Arkansas. He died in California, and I have that record--no birth. I even have his and Grandma Rose's marriage certificate, (Idaho) but there is nothing on that. Can you help me, please?"

Mrs. Jane Sutton Phillips, 4009 Redwood, Corpus Christi, Texas 78411 says: "I am interested in locating information about the Seneca SUTTON family of Fayetteville. At this time I am trying to locate the parents of Seneca Sutton, and their home in Kentucky, but any information would be helpful."

Mrs. Wilma S. Cogdell, 4335 Charleswood, Memphis, Tennessee 38117 writes: "Would like to exchange information on ancestors and descendants of Seneca SUTTON, b. 1802, in Lincoln County, Ky., died 1857, in Washington Co., Ark., married 1834 Isabelle HOUSTON. Their children were: James T., b. ca 1835 somewhere in Missouri; Henry, b. ca 1841 in Arkansas; Mary, 1846; George, 1848; and Isabella, 1853. Seneca Sutton and his brother James Sutton were merchants in Fayetteville in 1850."

(See first story in this issue, page 7, about James Sutton.)

Mrs. L. O. Cavitt, Hamlin, Texas 79520, writes: "My husband's grandfather, Leroy Pope CAVITT (LeRoy or Lee Roy) lived in Fayetteville, Arkansas in the mid-1800s. He married Mary L. Pulliam (Molly or Mary Ellen) Sept. 26, 1856. They may have married there in Fayetteville. If so, two or three children may have been born to them before they came to Texas. We are trying to find out where and when Leroy Cavitt was born."

Darla Sue Loyd of 504 North Chautauqua, Sedan, Kansas 87361 is tracing back the McDOWELL and ROBERTS family names and needs help. "My great=grandparents, James J. McDowell and Sarah E. Roberts McDowell were married in Fayetteville, Ark. on Nov. 29, 1865. My great-grandfather ran a store there in the 1860s and Sarah's folks, Wiley and Anna Roberts, lived on a farm between Wyman and Baldwin, Ark. This farm was bought in 1857 by the Roberts family. Before this, it was owned by parents of James J. McDowell, James and Jane McDowell. Any information you can give me will be appreciated."

Michael E. Pollock, 1913 North Ode Street #103, Arlington, Va. 22209 writes: "I have undertaken compiling a genealogy of all POLLOCKS on which I can find information. The surname is possibly familiar to you, as there were (and possibly still are) two Pollock families in Washington County, Arkansas--those of Lorenzo D. and Benjamin F., and I believe them to be related, probably uncle and nephew. I am not of this particular Pollock family, but would appreciate any assistance you can render me in contacting any descendants of these two families and in obtaining vital statistics on the same. My finances are limited as I am a graduate student and am pursuing the genealogy in my spare time. I would be glad to exchange information and even to offer relevant data on these families for publication in FLASHBACK. I have a considerable amount of material on Pollocks from nearly every state in the Union."

"I am seeking genealogical information about my great-great-grandfather. His name was Jesse JORDAN. I have been told that he established a store and church at a community known as Evening Shade. According to my informant this was near Rose Cemetery between Rhea's Mill and Savoy. Can you help me? Any information would be greatly appreciated." Mrs. E. W. Dozier, 10481 East Libery Road, Galt, California 95632.

Mrs. Robert Porter of 6135 Dalhart Avenue, La Mesa, California 02041 says: "I am compiling a family history of the McCORMICK family and need information about my relatives on this line: James, Peter, and John. Peter homesteaded near Highway 16 and State Farm Road, a log house. John could have had something to do with the Ozark Institute or owned the property later."

Mrs. J. B. Sharp, 3517 Slade Boulevard, Fort Worth, Texas 76116 writes: "Recently I visited your library in a search for our CALDWELLS (or COLDWELL or CULWELL). Seven brothers (and families) and their mother appear on the 1840 census. Only one of the families stayed on there; the other six came to Texas. In an article in FLASHBACK I learned that James Caldwell and second wife, Nancy, were buried at Goshen Cemetery. We drove out there but did not find a monument for his first wife Almeda nor his mother, Elizabeth. The father died in North Carolina. Is there another cemetery in the early-day townships of Brush Creek and Richland that might be the burial place of ancestor Elizabeth Caldwell? Thanks for any help."

From James L. Pickens, Box 984, Hayfork, California 96041 we have the following Query: "Do you have a record of the birth of Pleasant HANKINS born in Richland, Arkansas about 1848? Who were his father and mother, and where were they born? Any and all information will be greatly appreciated. Also, would like to know about a James Hankins (about 1858), Sneth Hankins and a Sarah PICKENS: also a Molenda GARDINER.

Mrs. Charles Chupet, 1365 South Orange Drive, Los Angeles, California 90019 would like information on the sons of Washington GRAY who lived in Evansville, Vineyard area, Washington County from 1831 to 1849. His daughters included Cassandra, who married Leonard SCHULER (SHULER in records) in 1831, and Amanda, who married William H. JOHNSON, attorney in Mt. Pleasant, Texas in 1848 or 1849. After the Lewis EVANS Gold Rush Expedition, of which Leonard and Gus O. Shuler were members, Leonard and family moved to Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and Gus O. "went north." Where? The latter married sometime between 1840 and 1849. To whom? What date? Any information appreciated.

Mrs. Nell M. Schwericke of 319 East Clegern Avenue, Edmond, OK 73034, says: "Information is requested about my ancestor. who served as a 'water boy' out of that county for the Confederacy. His name was John Marion LONG, b. 19 Aug. 1847, Mo., died 1929 Oklahoma. Son of widow Sarah Long. John Marion Long's father died in that county just prior to the war. Would your cemetery listings show his name - Jackson Long, 1817, Ky.? Any copies of data will be appreciated and paid for."

"In the obituary on Alcey (Allie) HODGES from the Fayetteville Democrat which Pat Donat was kind enough to send me, there is mention of her aged brother. I had not heard of him until receiving this copy. I do not know Alcy's maiden name or that of her brother--possibly Barnes. Can someone help me?" Nancy Long, 6309 Edgefield Street, Lakewood, California 90713.

Helen Cooper Howe, 1516 Northview, Cincinnati, Ohio 45223 asks for information about her COOPER family. "Major James Washington Cooper was born in 1842 in Bedford County, Tennessee and is supposed to have died in 1918; it is my understanding that he is buried in Fayetteville. The Coopers came to the Fayetteville area in 1860, and I suspect that his father Jonathan Jas. Cooper may be buried there. He was born on May 15, 1809, and it is thought that he died in 1863. James Washington's mother Mary Ann Wilson Young is also supposedly buried in Fayetteville. She was born in 1811 in Jessamine County, Kentucky and died in 1897. In addition, there were other Coopers, including William Cooper b. 1840, Sarah Cooper Walker, and Margaret Cooper Sutton. On my father's mother's side were the Nester Fort (Forte) family."

Any old letters or manuscripts hidden in your attic?
Submit them to FLASHBACK.

OLD CIRCUIT COURT

BY LLOYD MCCONNELL

On January 8, 1883 a term of Circuit Court was begun at Fayetteville in the court house in the center of the Square, with James M. Pittman the judge and C. M. Henry the sheriff of Washington County.

In an unusual move the Judge quashed the whole list of Grand and Petit jurors saying they had not been called in accordance with the laws in such cases made and provided. He ordered the Sheriff to call a new list of Grand Jurors from the persons attending the term of Court. In those days, almost everyone who was able to do so attended the term of court, where they were privileged to hear many good arguments from the most able attorneys in the state.

The sheriff summoned from the courtroom the following people who were examined and qualified by the judge to serve as grand jurors: Thomas J. Hunt, Josiah Thompson, T. Y. Epps, Fielding Hash, Pallas T. Smith, James McClatehey, B. F. Paton, Hamilton Blackburn, D. C. Mason, Tomas Webster, Robert Medearis, Albert Buchanan, Wright Frost, W. W. Moore, W. S. Bartholomew, and G. W. Barnett, who answered the inquiries of the court and satisfied him that they were qualified citizens, eligible to serve as jurors.

H. H. Alexander was later added to the list to replace Mr. Hash. The petit jurors summoned by the sheriff included Henry Williams, Ben Johnson, Martin Late, Thomas Mhoon, W. D. Parks, W. D. Simpton, J. H. Burton, T. J. Harmon, W. M. Dowell, H. M. Wood, Abe Cate, Joel Ritter, J. P. Pyeatt, James Carter, W. D. Fincher, Ed Sharp, J. W. Morris, George F. Dean, Peter Ownbey, J. B. Doss, Frank Mayes, N. L. Mitchell, James Bragg and James Barnes, 24 good petit jurors, who took the oath prescribed and were empaneled as jurors.

There were many first day fines levied for smaller offences, described in the indictments as "Salt and Battry, DP (Disturbing Public Worship)," Disturbing a Religious Gathering, Breach of the Peace (threatening bodily harm or a cuss-out--sometimes a crap game). One dollar fines were meted out to Samuel Walker, Harrison Dillinger, Wesley Oxford, B. F. Walker, and Frank Walker, with $5.00 fines going to W. B. Collins, Perry Parker, A. E. Lewis, Dot Morgan, and J. F. Wood.

On the second day of the term, A. B. Greenwood, an attorney, was elected Special Judge because Judge Pittman was interested or had business connections with the parties in court.

G. W. Murdock was added to the Grand Jury to replace Moore who had become ill. As several witnesses failed to answer the subpoenas served on them by the sheriff to appear before the grand jury, attachments were issued requiring them to attend.

Also, several witnesses who had been before the grand jury and caused indictments to be issued for some trivial offenses, failed to report for the trial, and the judge became incensed. He opined that if the persons testifying before the grand jury thought it important enough to cause the indictment to be rendered, it was also important enough for that witness to appear at the trial. So, he ordered the sheriff to round them up and bring them in.

One Henry Liles refused to answer the questions put to him by the grand jury, and since at that time the 5th Amendment to the Constitution was not used as it has been in recent years, he just flatly refused to answer their questions, and they so reported to the Court. So the Judge tried his hand at it, and when Mr. Liles refused to answer those questions, also, he was fined $10.00

Taken before the grand jury again by the bailiff, Mr. Liles continued to play shut-mouth, and the bailiff returned him to the court room where he was fined $40.00 and given ten days in jail. He still persisted in refusing so the judge said, "Take this man to the bridge gang and let him help build the bridges over the creeks." I don't know just how long this kind of labor lasted, because we run out of court days. Maybe it can be picked up at a later time.

Selling liquor within three miles of the Arkansas Industrial University was punishable with a stiff fine, and many persons appeared in court on that charge. Guess it was so you had to go three miles out in the country to get a drink.

S. B. Trammell, John and William Johnson, paid $1.00 fines. J. D. Powell had to deposit $50.00 in the County Treasury, and Douglas Sexton paid $5.00 for a misdemeanor.

Silas Moody sued Davis and Woodruff. Mr. Vernon, as Administrator for Audley Skillern, brought suit against J. D. and C. W. Walker. Thomas Horn sued the Town of Fayetteville for taking some of his land and a jury awarded him the sum of $6.00 as damages.

Ben Collins reportedly failed to work the road and was fined $10.00. So did George Miller but the jury found him not guilty. Jarrett Trammel paid a $50.00 fine.

Judge Pittman disqualified himself frequently as trials came

up, and a special judge was elected to serve. N. J. Shaw, W. Y. Wilker and W. B. Brodie were added to the jury.

H. A. Dinsmore, the prosecuting attorney, who had sworn to uphold and enforce the law, was indicted for carrying a pistol and the judge replaced him, appointing Hon. A. M. Wilson in his place.

James McCoy was fined $25.00. There were no major criminal cases tried at this term, and the court appointed D. C. Mason, Robert Medearis and George S. Allbright to select the jury for the July term.

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MARRIAGES IN 1885

BY LLOYD MCCONNELL

W. H. Delay, 31, and Miss M. B. Ramsey, 20, of Mankins (later called Sulphur City) were married on September 3rd by the Rev. Johnson Crawford of Middle Fork, also a justice of the peace.

William Diment, 20, and Miss Martha J. Burt, 26, had a wedding ceremony on January 6th by Rev. T. H. Day.

H. B. Dockery and Miss Maggie V. Pierce, ages 21 and 18, of the Brentwood area, were married November 22nd by the Reverend Edmon Osburn.

Justice of the peace M. York recited the ritual for Strickler residents John Dodson, 19, and Miss Elizabeth Umphree, 17, the 15th of November.

Milton York, a justice of the peace at West Fork, performed on April 12th a ceremony for Mac Dodson, 22, of Fayetteville, and Miss Maggie Cagle, 16, of West Fork.

F. M. Drake, 26, and Miss Flora Jobe, 17, he of Cincinnati, and she living at Dutch Mills, were married December 2nd by Dutch Mills minister Ira Williams.

A certificate of marriage, signed by J. R. Kelley, LD, proved the wedding of George Dutton and May Bell Gardner, aged 21 and 15 years, who lived at Goshen. So did Mr. Kelley.

A twelve-year-old girl, Emma G. Howe, became the bride of 32-year-old O. W. Earle of West Fork, in a ceremony by B. M. Curtis on the 6th of December. Mr. Curtis was a justice and also a preacher.

R. W. Eavens, 26, and Miss Lillie Privett, 22, both of Fayetteville, went to Elder John C. Sherry for a November 8th wedding ceremony.

George P. Eidson, 23, and Miss Katie Watson, 22, were married on October 25th by Rev. J. W. Walden. Eidson lived at Springdale and his bride at Fayetteville or thereabouts.

W. F. Greene, a minister, performed the February 23rd ceremony for R. W. Elington, 29, of Farmington, and Miss Sarah McKinzie, 22, of the Prairie Grove vicinity.

N. H. C. Elms, 28, of Summers, and Miss Amenta Bradley, 21, and of the same village, went to Justice of the Peace W. D. Parks for their wedding on February 28th.

Jasper Evins and Miss Elizabeth Evins, 22 and 23 years of age, took their marriage license to their preacher, N. F. Goodrich, who signed it and dated it May 4th.

James Whitaker, minister of the "Prost." church, performed the ceremony for Strickler residents John W. Fansler, 26, and Miss M. T. Bartholomew, 16, on October 1st.

G. W. Fields, 26, and Miss Julie Caswell, 17, of Dutch Mills, asked the Rev. Norman Gaylor to perform their wedding December 31st. Tomorrow a New Year and a new bride!

R. H. Fisher, 23, of Boonsboro, and Miss Nannie Watters, 21, of Evansville, were wed on March 22nd by Minister Ishum(?) Jones.

A. D. Fritch of Hindsville and Miss Lavana Dennis, of the same address, age 22 and 18, were married on December 10th. Calvin Eans signed their certificate.

J. T. Boyd performed the marriage for J. R. Ford, 25, and Miss Kittie Smith, 19, of Springdale. Their date was June 8th.

C. L. Foster, 30, and Miss M. J. Quinton, 32, of Fayetteville, took their license to D. W. Moore, MG, for his services on October 4th.

A Winslow couple, Isaac Foster, 29, and Miss Clara M. Randell, 16, were married on May 10th, by the Rev. J. W. Cook.

Willard French from Rogers, Arkansas, and Miss Olive Chiles of Springdale, both 28, were married by J. C. Massie, a justice of the peace on November 19th.

W. F. Fusselman, 21, and Miss Arvetta E. Marquiss, 17, Cincinnati, went to the Rev. P. B. Hopkins for a wedding July 2nd.

Robert Garrett, 33, of Carters Store, on Middle Fork, wed Miss Susan E. Page, 27, of the Strain community, on January 19th. Justice of the peace John F. Johnson did the ceremony.

John A. Gibson, 26, and Miss N. M. Stanturg, 26, also of Winslow, were married on September 8th by John W. Cook, MG.

T. H. Day, a minister, performed the February 2nd wedding ceremony for S. W. Gleason, 51, and Elizabeth Price, 31, of Cincinnati, ARkansas.

W. M. Goddard, 24, and Miss Katie Bates, 23, their post office given as Sexton, Arkansas, were married on March 23rd by Justice W. V. Jobe.

West Forkers C. F. Goldsborough, 20, and Miss Julia Harp, 19, were married on June 28th by H. H. Davis, local justice of the peace.

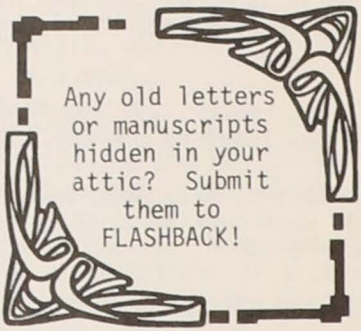
E. C. Goodman, 21, and Miss Emma Hewett, 19, of Springdale, were married by the Rev. S. R. Beamon, on September 3rd.

The Rev. J. L. D. Houston performed a January 11th wedding for J. C. Goodman, 26, and Miss H. V. Beaman, 19, of Springdale.

G. D. Goodner, 20, and Miss Mattie Gillis, 19, both residents of Prairie Grove, were married by local justice, H. H. Collier on December 29th.

R. B. Gratehouse, 21, and Miss Sarah Wasson, 18, both from Elm Springs, took the vows before J. A. Walden, minister of the ME Chuch South, on November 1st. Some county clerks spelled like it sounded.

J. W. Grants, 23, and Miss T. A. Greer, 25, both of Evansville were married December 20th by J. C. Robertson, a minister.



FLASHBACK can use stories, letters, diaries, photos, genealogies, Bibles, and family histories.

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